



Administration for Children and Families

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

National Quality Improvement Center on Tailored Services, Placement Stability and
Permanency for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Children and
Youth in Foster Care

HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-CW-1126

Application Due Date: 05/17/2016

National Quality Improvement Center on Tailored Services, Placement Stability and Permanency for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Children and Youth in Foster Care

HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-CW-1126

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**Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Program Office: Administration on Children, Youth and Families - Children's Bureau

Funding Opportunity Title: National Quality Improvement Center on Tailored Services, Placement Stability and Permanency for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Children and Youth in Foster Care

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-CW-1126

Primary CFDA Number: 93.556

Due Date for Applications: 05/17/2016

Executive Summary

Notices:

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire funding opportunity announcement (FOA) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants Page at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.

The purpose of this funding opportunity announcement (FOA) is to establish, by awarding a cooperative agreement, one National Quality Improvement Center (QIC) that will conduct 4-6 projects in public child welfare system sites to test a set of interventions that support the permanency, well-being, and stability of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ), as well as two-spirit, children and youth in the foster care system. The QIC will complete an evaluation of each of the project sites and a cross-site evaluation to produce evidence-informed or evidence-based models of engagement, services, and interventions that demonstrate improved well-being outcomes and provide permanency and placement stability for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care.

Expected outcomes for the QIC include:

- Development and implementation of four to six research projects in state, county, and tribal child welfare systems that commit to building effective practice models to improve permanency, well-being, and placement stability outcomes for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care;
- Integration of identified practice models within the project site system, including the policies, programs, and practices that impact LGBTQ children and youth in foster care;

- Promising practices and evidence-informed/evidence-based models of engagement, appropriate collective and individual services and intervention that can be linked to improved outcomes for the target population;
- Improved permanency, well-being, and placement stability outcomes for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care in selected project sites;
- Through comprehensive, project-specific evaluation activities, development of a catalogue of LGBTQ-responsive strategies and practices to lay the groundwork for further development of evidence-informed/evidence-based models of intervention for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care, with supporting protocols, tools and products that child welfare systems seeking to implement improved LGBTQ services can look to for guidance, insight, and replication;
- A cross-site evaluation that will build a body of knowledge regarding the appropriate elements to consider and address when building and implementing a comprehensive model of effective engagement, services, and interventions for LGBTQ children and youth in care.

I. Program Description

Statutory Authority

The statutory authority is section 436(b)(1) of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, Title IV-B, Subpart 2 of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 629f(b)(1).

Description

Background

While children and youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender or who are questioning their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression have many of the same needs as other children and youth in foster care, they also may have specialized needs that relate specifically to their LGBTQ identity. For example, in qualitative studies, LGBTQ youth in foster care have reported harassment by peers in child welfare settings, discomfort or rejection among foster parents and agency staff, and a lack of services to meet their specific developmental or health care needs, suggesting that LGBTQ children and youth may be more likely to experience disruption in foster care placements (see *Human Services for Low-Income and At-Risk LGBT Populations: An Assessment of the Knowledge Base and Research Needs* at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/lgbt_hsneeds_assessment_reportfinal12_15.pdf). Child welfare agencies and partners that serve this population must be attuned to providing safe, supportive, and affirming environments for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

QIC Roles and Responsibilities

The QIC will develop evidence-informed/evidence-based models of engagement, services and interventions that address the array of individual needs of LGBTQ and two-spirit children and youth in foster care through the development of four to six research project sites that commit to building practice models to improve permanency, well-being, and placement stability

outcomes for the target population. The QIC will be completed in two phases. Phase I, which includes the first 9 months of the project, will serve as a planning period. Phase II, which includes month 10 through year 5, will include implementation, evaluation, and assurance of sustainability in each of the project sites. The QIC and project sites should begin plan implementation on the first day of fiscal year 2018.

Areas of focus for which the QIC will develop evidence-informed/evidence-based models include the following:

- Creation of safe spaces for LGBTQ children and youth to self-identify, methods for assessment of their strengths and needs, and identification of data collection procedures that ensure confidentiality;
- Confidentiality issues;
- Appropriate and tailored service provision to meet specific needs of the target population;
- Placement stability supports to children, youth, and caregivers, including birth families in reunification cases;
- Permanency innovations for those not reunified with families of origin; and
- Increased LGBTQ competence and response by agency staff, foster and non-foster family caregivers, and service providers in congregate care settings.

The QIC will support innovative, collaborative, and effective practices in the development of the strategies for each of the project sites. The QIC will ensure that each project site is capable of assessing their LGBTQ population and their collective and individual needs and developing appropriate service interventions and service delivery mechanisms in the selected focus area of each project site. The QIC will support the implementation of interventions and evaluations of the selected project sites throughout the life of this grant. The QIC will also ensure that each project site is capable of integrating these models of practice in child welfare systems, including collaborating placement agencies and service providers.

Through comprehensive, project-specific evaluation activities, the QIC will develop a catalogue of evidence-informed/evidence-based models of practice, with supporting protocols, tools, and products that child welfare systems seeking to implement improved LGBTQ services can look to for guidance, insight, and replication. The QIC will also conduct a cross-site evaluation that will build a body of knowledge regarding the appropriate elements to consider and address when building and implementing a comprehensive model of effective engagement, services, and interventions for LGBTQ children and youth in care.

Project Sites

The QIC will, using a methodology to be approved by the Children's Bureau (CB), select four to six project sites that will commit and propose to test a set of interventions that support the permanency, well-being, and stability of LGBTQ children and youth in the foster care system in at least two of any combination of the following five areas of focus:

- Appropriate methods for safe identification, assessment of individual needs, and data collection related to target population demographics and permanency, well-being, and placement stability outcomes, with attention to addressing confidentiality issues;
- Engagement in effective collective and individual services;

- Placement stability supports to children, youth, and caregivers, including birth families in reunification cases;
- Permanency innovations for those not reunified with families of origin; and
- Increased LGBTQ competence and response by agency staff, caregivers, and service providers in congregate care settings.

Each state, county, or tribal child welfare system project site selected by the QIC may have a mix of unique and/or shared culturally or LGBTQ responsive components. However, it is expected that each project will be tailored to meet the unique needs of that state, county, or tribal child welfare LGBTQ population.

For more information about project site components, including examples of project components and their expected outcomes, refer to *Appendix, Project Site Components*. For information about the site selection process, refer to *Appendix, Project Site Selection*.

Target Population

The target population will be children and youth in foster care who identify as LGBTQ within the service area of the selected state, county, or tribal child welfare systems. The QIC will develop a methodology for addressing special considerations in working with this target population, such as identification, assessment of individual needs, placement status, and confidentiality, to be approved by CB.

Use of Funds

Grant funds may be used to support service transformation efforts, placement stability efforts, permanency efforts, and development of a responsive system for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care. Activities may include, but are not limited to, building collaborative partnerships; screening, assessing, and planning safe and affirming services; training and building staff and provider capacity; installing and implementing data collection and tracking; and evaluating and disseminating the gathered information. The QIC will implement a plan to sustain service transformations within the child welfare service delivery systems of the selected project sites.

Grant funds may be used to purchase services at the individual child and family levels or to build the capacity of child welfare systems to develop an integrated and coherent approach to developing responsive services and placement stability efforts that improve permanency and well-being outcomes for LGBTQ children and youth.

Collaboration

The QIC will actively collaborate with CB and other partners to achieve the purposes of this FOA. The QIC will collaborate with agencies and organizations with which partnerships are critical to successfully implement the proposed project. State, county, or tribal child welfare systems selected as project sites will demonstrate a commitment to improving outcomes for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care and will develop and implement the project in full collaboration with the QIC.

CB expects that LGBTQ children and youth, their birth families, and caregivers (including relatives, guardians, foster parents, and congregate care staff) will be engaged in the development of interventions and be afforded an active role in assessing the interventions

implemented. Service providers, placement providers, and other appropriate stakeholders (public and private entities) should be engaged at the project sites as well to develop lasting systemic change.

CB's intent is to have the QIC and the project sites mutually implement these projects. CB's intent is not to have the QIC make subawards. The QIC will be expected to enter into mutually binding work agreements with each project site. The QIC's proposed project sites and mutually binding work agreements must receive final approval from the CB Federal Project Officer.

Evaluation

The QIC will undertake evaluation of activities under this FOA. The QIC shall have evaluation responsibilities, as will project sites. It is expected that evaluation activities will roll out in an orderly process.

CB expects that the QIC funded under this grant will contribute to the development of a knowledge base around successful LGBTQ-responsive strategies for identifying, assessing, and responding to the needs of LGBTQ children and youth. The QIC will design and implement site-specific evaluations for each project site, as well as a cross-site evaluation. The cross-site and site-specific evaluations will be guided by logic models developed by the QIC and the project sites. Evaluations will focus on planning, implementation, outcomes, and cost. The QIC will also be responsible for providing technical assistance to project sites in collecting and reporting evaluation data.

CB encourages the QIC to use participatory and utilization-focused evaluation approaches that will help guide project assessment, planning, and implementation throughout the grant. The QIC's evaluation is expected to provide regular, timely, and useful feedback to support successful implementation and intervention fidelity, as well as to contribute to the developing knowledge base about successful strategies for adopting, installing, implementing, scaling up and sustaining promising practices to evidence-informed/evidence-based services for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care.

The QIC is required to rigorously evaluate the project activities. Rigorous research incorporates the four following criteria:

- **Credibility:** Ensuring that what is intended to be evaluated is actually what is being evaluated; making sure that descriptions of the phenomena or experience being studied are accurate and recognizable to others; ensuring that the method used is the most definitive and compelling approach that is available and feasible for the question being addressed. If conclusions about program efficacy are being examined, the study design should include a comparison group (i.e., randomized control trial or a well-designed quasi-experimental study); see the HomVEE website for standards for study design in estimating program impacts: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/homvee>).
- **Applicability:** Generalizability of findings beyond current project (i.e., when findings "fit" into contexts outside the study situation). Ensuring the population being studied represents one or more of the population being served by the program.
- **Consistency:** Consistently following and clearly describing processes and methods, so that someone else could replicate the approach and other studies can confirm what is found.

- **Neutrality:** Producing results that are as objective as possible and acknowledge the bias brought to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the results.

CB intends for the process evaluation to support the revision and adaptation of interventions when necessary and to generate knowledge by the end of the project about whether the implementation activities have successfully embedded the interventions in institutional practice within and/or across targeted systems. For example, the QIC might evaluate the degree to which its interventions have been embedded into policies, interagency agreements, data systems, organizational structure, quality assurance protocols, and training and human resource systems. These institutional and organizational changes may be critical to the success of the proposed interventions, fidelity to the intervention models, and improved outcomes. Additionally, the QIC will actively disseminate findings throughout the project – including initial and interim findings.

The QIC in collaboration with their project sites and CB may be required to produce a comprehensive evaluation report at the conclusion of the project period and present findings to CB and other stakeholders.

The QIC will have a plan for addressing protection of human subjects. General information about the Department of Health and Human Services Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained using the link in the table under *Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances and Certifications*, and in *Section VIII. Checklist*.

The QIC must participate if CB chooses to do a federally led evaluation or a technical assistance contract that relates to this FOA.

For more information about the evaluation responsibilities of the project sites, refer to *Appendix, Project Site Evaluation Responsibilities*.

For more information about focus areas for the evaluation, refer to *Appendix, Focus Areas for Evaluation*.

Dissemination

CB expects that information and knowledge generated by these projects will be shared with the field and efforts will be made to integrate project knowledge into policy and practice. Grantees are expected to disseminate strategically and incorporate dissemination activities into their work. Their dissemination activities will focus on key target audiences, for specific purposes, understanding what these target audiences need to know, and effectively getting this information to them. Projects will disseminate their individual project products and findings and work with the other projects in this grant cluster to disseminate cross-cluster products and findings. Projects will disseminate at appropriate times. They will evaluate the extent to which their target audiences have received project knowledge and used it as intended, and assess the impact of dissemination. They will allocate sufficient staff time for dissemination.

The QIC and project sites will be expected to work throughout the course of their projects with Federal Project Officers, CB training and technical assistance providers, and other projects in this grant cluster on the following:

- Finalize individual and cluster-wide dissemination goals and objectives;
- Identify and engage with target audiences for dissemination;

- Produce detailed procedures, materials, and other products based on the program evaluation;
- Develop and disseminate summarized/synthesized information about the project; and
- Produce a high quality comprehensive final report suitable for archiving in the CB Discretionary Grant Library at https://library.childwelfare.gov/cbgrants/ws/library/docs/cb_grants/GrantHome

Although not required, the QIC and its project sites are strongly encouraged to consider using Section 508 standards to ensure the products, publications, web content, and communications materials are accessible and in conformity with applicable accessibility standards described in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 749d).

CB expects that the QIC will include the following notice with all grantee materials, products, publications, news releases, etc.:

Funded through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, Grant # _____. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the funders, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This information is in the public domain. Readers are encouraged to copy and share it, but please credit _____.

II. Federal Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Total Funding:	\$2,000,000
Expected Number of Awards:	1
Award Ceiling:	\$2,000,000 Per Project Period
Award Floor:	\$1,600,000 Per Project Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$2,000,000 Per Project Period
Anticipated Project Start Date:	09/30/2016

Length of Project Periods:

60-month project with five 12-month budget periods

Additional Information on Awards:

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds.

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Note: For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A recipient's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** See *Section III.2.* of this announcement for information on cost-sharing or matching requirements.

Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement

A cooperative agreement is a specific method of awarding federal assistance in which substantial federal involvement is anticipated. A cooperative agreement clearly defines the respective responsibilities of CB and the QIC prior to the award. CB anticipates that agency involvement will produce programmatic benefits to the recipient otherwise unavailable to them for carrying out the project. The involvement and collaboration include the following:

- CB review and approval of planning stages of the activities before implementation phases may begin;
- CB and recipient joint collaboration in the performance of key programmatic activities (i.e., strategic planning, implementation, information technology enhancements, training and technical assistance, publications or products, and evaluation);
- Close monitoring by CB of the requirements stated in the FOA that limit the awardee's discretion with respect to scope of services offered; and
- To ensure compliance with the intent of this funding, close monitoring by CB during performance that may exceed those federal stewardship responsibilities customary for grant activities.

Please see *Section IV.6 Funding Restrictions* for limitations on the use of federal funds awarded under this announcement.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility is open to the following: state governments; county governments; city or township governments; special district governments; independent school districts; public and state controlled institutions of higher education; Native American tribal governments (federally recognized); public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities; Native American tribal organizations (other than federally recognized tribal governments); non-profits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education; non-profits without 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education; private institutions of higher education; for profit organizations other than small businesses; and small businesses.

Collaborative efforts are strongly encouraged, but applicants must identify a primary applicant responsible for administering the grant.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement. Faith-based organizations are encouraged to review the ACF Policy on Grants to Faith-Based Organizations at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/acf-policy-on-grants-to-faith-based-organizations>.

See *Section IV.2. Legal Status of Applicant Entity* for documentation required to support eligibility.

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: No

For all federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR 75.306.

For awards that require matching by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

III.3. Other

Application Disqualification Factors

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at www.Grants.gov. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow the applicant to submit applications in paper format. Information and the requirements for requesting an exemption from required electronic application submission are found in "Request an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

Missing the Application Deadlines (Late Applications)

The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. Electronic applications submitted to www.Grants.gov after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the www.Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by, ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the submission will generate a new date and time-stamp email notification. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in

the Overview and in Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times. Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

Notification of Application Disqualification

Applications that are disqualified under these criteria are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

IV. Application and Submission Information

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

CB Operations Center
c/o LCG, Inc.
1400 Key Boulevard
Suite 900
Arlington, VA 22209
Phone: (888) 203-6161
Email: CB@grantreview.org

Electronic Application Submission:

The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at www.Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package available in the FOA's Grants.gov synopsis at www.Grants.gov. They are also available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>. See *Section IV.2.Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to www.Grants.gov.

Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):

Available at the Grants.gov Forms Repository website at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>.

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

FORMATTING ACF APPLICATIONS

In FY 2013 ACF implemented a new application upload requirement. Each applicant applying electronically via www.Grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)

AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.

AOR authorization is part of the registration process at www.Grants.gov, where the AOR will create a short profile and obtain a username and password from the Grants.gov Credential Provider. AORs will only be authorized for the DUNS number registered in the System for Awards Management (SAM).

Point of Contact

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

Application Checklist

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials.

Accepted Font Style

Applications must be in Times New Roman (TNR), 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be TNR 10-point font.

Page Limitations

Applicants must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:". Page limitation(s) do not include SFs and OMB-approved forms.

All applications must be double-spaced. An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the last extra pages removed and the removed pages will not be reviewed.

Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements and may be single-spaced: the table of contents, the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required SFs, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, third-party agreements, letters of support, footnotes, tables, the line-item budget and/or the budget justification.

Adherence to FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements

Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the objective review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

In instances where formatting and font requirements are not adhered to, ACF uses a formula to determine the actual number of pages to be removed. The formula counts the number of characters an applicant uses when following the instructions and using 12-point TNR and compares the resulting number with that of the submitted application. For example, an applicant using TNR, 11-point font, with 1-inch margins all around, and single-spacing, would have an additional 26 lines, or 1500 characters, which is equal to 4/5 of an additional page. Extra pages resulting from this formula will be removed and will not be reviewed. Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

For applicants that submit paper applications, double-sided pages will be counted as two pages. When the maximum allowed number of pages is reached, excess pages will be removed and will not be made available to reviewers.

NOTE: Applicants failing to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will be sent after awards have been issued and will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

Copies Required

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

Signatures

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at www.Grants.gov.

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures of the authorized representatives.

Accepted Application Format

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they are 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

If possible, applicants are encouraged to include page numbers for each page within the application.

ACF generally does not encourage submission of scanned documents as they tend to have reduced clarity and readability. If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Documents must be scanned page-for-page, meaning that applicants may not scan more than one page of a document onto a single page.

PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:

The Project Description file must include these items in this order:

1. Table of Contents
2. Abstract
3. Objectives and Need for Assistance
4. Approach
5. Evaluation
6. Organizational Profiles
7. Line Item Budget and Budget Justification

The Appendices file must include these items in this order:

1. Certifications and Assurances
2. Third-party Agreements
3. Organizational Capacity
4. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

The total page limit, inclusive of both files, is 125 pages.

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via www.Grants.gov. ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.

Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding SFs and OMB-approved forms.

File One: Must contain the entire Project Description, and the Budget and Budget Justification (including a line-item budget and a budget narrative).

File Two: Must contain all documents required in the Appendices.

Adherence to the Two-File Requirement

No more than two files will be accepted for the review. Applications with additional files will be amended and files will be removed from the review. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

Application Upload Requirements

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations, are listed earlier in this section.

To adhere to the two-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Professional they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on “Support” at the top bar menu and select “Adobe Software Compatibility”, which is listed under the topic “Find Answers Online.” The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test application package. Grant.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions if an applicant is unable to open the test application package. There is also a help page for configuring Firefox and Chrome to open PDFs using Adobe software.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for applicants that have received error messages while attempting to save an application package. It also addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or with SAM.gov, please refer to ACF’s “Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues” document for complete guidance at

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf under "How to Apply for a Grant/Submit an Application."

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

Naming Application Submission Files

Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by www.Grants.gov. Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces). Special characters that are allowed under Grants.gov's naming conventions, and are accommodated by ACF's systems, are listed in the instructions available in the Download Application Package at Grants.gov. Please also see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

Use only file formats supported by ACF

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

ACF supports the following file formats:

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format

application to be accepted for review. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under *Application Submission Options* for more information.

Format Requirements for Paper Applications

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single FOA, or multiple applications under separate FOAs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes. All pages in the application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this FOA at www.Grants.gov.

Other versions of required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at Grants.gov <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.

SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants may cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Form is available at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html . General information about the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/ . Applicants may also contact OHRP by email (ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov) or by phone (240-453-6900).
Mandatory Grant Disclosure	Submission is required for all applicants and recipients, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. Disclosures must be sent in writing to: The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,	Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR 75.113

	<p>Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200, Washington, DC 20201</p> <p><u>And</u></p> <p>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator, 330 Independence Avenue, SW., Cohen Building, Room 5527, Washington, DC 20201</p>	
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non- Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs	<p>Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.</p>	<p>Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.</p>
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	<p>If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>	<p>If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an</p>

		employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	<p>A DUNS number is required of all applicants.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.</p> <p>Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p> <p>SAM registration is available at http://www.sam.gov.</p>	<p>A DUNS number and SAM registration are eligibility requirements for all applicants.</p> <p>See Section <i>IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.</p>

Non-Federal Reviewers

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

The Project Description

The Project Description Overview

Purpose

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Program Description*. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

General Expectations and Instructions

Applicants should develop project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description

Introduction

Applicants must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.1. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

Table of Contents

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

Project Summary/Abstract

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address

- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Objectives And Need For Assistance

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance including the nature and scope of the problem must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as well as data describing the needs of the target population and the proposed service area as needed. When appropriate, a literature review should be used to support the objectives and needs described in this section.

Approach

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

Applicants will describe how they will implement the program strategies and activities during Phase I: Planning (months 1 through 9) and Phase II: Implementation (month 10 through year 5).

Phase I: Planning

Applicants must describe how they will perform, at a minimum, the following functions during the initial 9-month planning process:

- Develop knowledge and report the results of the literature review and research of existing LGBTQ-responsive strategies and practices to lay the groundwork for further development of evidence-informed and evidence-based models of intervention for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care that address the provision of appropriate services, development of placement stability and permanency innovations, and the development of a LGBTQ-responsive system, including agency staff, caregivers, and providers;
- Develop, with CB, criteria for the selection of project sites;
- Select four to six state, county, or tribal child welfare system project sites, considering representation of various state, county, and tribal systems and varying structures; general, foster care, and target population sizes; placement types and permanency goal

- of the target population; and geographical spread in site selection;
- Review, with CB, the results of each proposed project selection site, including, but not limited to, system and project structures and project area demographics; numbers and characteristics of children and youth in target population; assessment of target population needs; focus areas selected; strategies and practices to be implemented; and the preliminary evaluation plan.
 - Collaborate with CB regarding the selected project sites during the planning and implementation phases;
 - Enter into mutually binding work agreements with each project site, which reflects CB's intent to have the QIC and the project sites mutually implement these projects. The QIC's proposed project sites and mutually binding work agreements must receive final approval from the Federal Project Officer;
 - Demonstrate current and thorough knowledge of how state, county, or tribal child welfare systems operate and how to develop and implement successful evidence-informed/evidence-based service models that create stability and permanency and afford individualized, appropriate services for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care systems;
 - Describe how their proposed interventions are LGBTQ and culturally responsive and an appropriate fit for the characteristics and needs of the groups targeted for services;
 - Develop plans for determining the estimated number of children/youth to be served by each project site;
 - Demonstrate how the project site's implementation and evaluation plans are feasible based on the capacity, resources, collaborative infrastructure, and conditions of the systems in which the program strategies are to be delivered;
 - Demonstrate how the project is clearly innovative and would lead to increased knowledge and understanding of the problems and issues described in *Section I. Program Description, Background*; and
 - Revisit the preliminary design for Phase II submitted in the QIC's original proposal and submit to CB a final design for Phase II (including a plan addressing the Evaluation Responsibilities and Activities sections below) that presents a clear and comprehensive vision of how the QIC would operate Phase II, subject to CB approval. The Phase II Implementation Plan and the final site selections are due to the Project Officer 9 months after the award of the cooperative agreement for review and approval. The QIC must describe the approach and processes that they would use to develop the Phase II Implementation Plan and address anticipated logistical and administrative challenges for the QIC. The final selections will include justification of each project site selected and address anticipated logistical and administrative challenges of the selected project sites. The Phase II Implementation Plan and final project site selections should be submitted to CB in a timely manner during Phase I, and it is expected that the QIC will cooperate fully with securing CB approval of these before the start of Phase II.

Phase II: Implementation

Applicants must describe how they will, at a minimum, implement the following components from month 10 through year 5 of the cooperative agreement:

- Develop an implementation plan for each project site, to be approved by CB. The plan will be submitted to CB at the beginning of Phase II. It is expected that the QIC will cooperate fully with securing CB approval of these plans before the first day of FY 2018;
- Design an administrative and management structure for (1) ensuring that projects are implemented within 90 days of their selection by the QIC and (2) monitoring sites, including ensuring project accountability;
- Develop a plan for technical assistance to selected project sites for on-going collaboration and support by the QIC, to include programmatic and evaluation aspects. The QIC will be required to not only monitor the operations of the projects, but also to provide ongoing support, guidance, and technical assistance to sites in project implementation, data collection, and evaluation;
- Develop a description of mechanisms for forming and maintaining a method of information sharing and collaboration between project sites;
- Develop a methodology for conducting an evaluation within each project site as well as cross-site evaluation, including ensuring that projects and participating organizations collect appropriate qualitative and quantitative process and outcome data;
- Identify linkages with appropriate organizations and resources at the QIC level and in the project sites; and
- Develop a strategy for integration and sustainability of effective practice models within the project site system, including the policies, programs, and practices that impact LGBTQ children and youth in foster care.

Applicants must describe how the following will be incorporated into their proposed projects throughout Phase I and Phase II:

- The inventory and application, as appropriate, of intervention strategies, practices, and evidence-informed/evidence-based services to project sites;
- Feasible methods of enhancing child welfare agency capacity to serve the target population and improve processes, practice, and functional outcomes for the target population; and
- Plans for establishing and building upon collaborative partnerships needed to guide and support successful implementation, including the meaningful involvement of consumers in the project sites.

Applicants also must describe how they will address the following:

- Serving the target population as described in *Section I, Project Requirements, Target Population*;
- Meeting the use of funds requirements as described in *Section I, Project Requirements, Use of Funds*; and
- Meeting the collaboration requirements as described in *Section I, Project Requirements, Collaboration*.

Applicants must describe how successful implementation of their proposed project would result in improved well-being, placement stability, and permanency outcomes for the target population.

Project Timeline and Milestones

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function, or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Funded Activities Evaluation Plan

Applicants must describe the plan for rigorous evaluation of funded activities. The evaluation may be supported by a logic model. The evaluation must assess processes and progress towards the goals and objectives of the project, and whether the project is having the expected effects and impacts. The evaluation plan must specify expected outcomes and any research questions. The plan must discuss how the results of this evaluation will provide greater understanding and improvement of the funded activities. The plan must include a valid and reliable measurement plan and sound methodological design. Details regarding the proposed data collection activities, the participants, and data management, and analyses plans must be described. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles foreseen in implementation of the planned evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed.

Applicants must present an evaluation plan that will (1) contribute to developing the knowledge base about the appropriate elements to consider and address when building and implementing a comprehensive model of effective engagement, services, and interventions for LGBTQ children and youth in care and (2) produce a catalogue of LGBTQ-responsive strategies and practices to lay the groundwork for further development of evidence-informed/evidence-based models of intervention for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care, with supporting protocols, tools, and products that child welfare systems seeking to implement improved LGBTQ services can look to for guidance, insight, and replication.

The applicant's evaluation plan must include how it will do the following:

- Discuss how the evaluation will be conducted for both the proposed QIC and each of the project sites;
- Implement the proposed rigorous evaluation methods, including timeline for activities, securing institutional review board (IRB) review (if applicable), and ongoing analysis for the QIC and each of the project sites;
- Describe how the evaluation plan would likely yield useful findings about effective strategies and contribute to and promote evidence-based and evidence-informed practices that could be used to guide replication in other settings;
- Articulate the factors and strategies associated with implementation barriers and

successful implementation, cost, maintenance, and sustainability, including contributing organizational and system conditions;

- Discuss the factors related to the appropriateness of fit between the selected practices and the systems and settings into which they are introduced;
- Identify the evaluator, cost of the evaluation activities, and the source of funds. If the applicant does not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation, then the applicant will subcontract with an institution of higher education or a third-party evaluator specializing in social sciences research and evaluation to conduct the evaluation. A skilled evaluator can help develop a logic model(s) and assist in designing an evaluation strategy(ies) that is (are) rigorous and appropriate given the goals and objectives of the proposed project. Evidence of the evaluators qualifications to undertake the proposed work should be provided;
- Propose an appropriate sampling plan that ensures sample sizes sufficient to detect significant effects;
- Use an appropriate comparison condition if the research is measuring the impact of the service system changes on participant outcomes or to compare various implementation strategies and their potential connection with implementation outcomes (e.g., applicants may choose to test different implementation approaches with the same service system changes, with different providers, or in different service areas);
- Propose a plan to conduct a cost evaluation. Factors that may be considered in this cost evaluation may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Service delivery hours;
 - Rates of reimbursement;
 - Staff and/or clinical caseloads;
 - Supervisor to worker and/or clinician ratios;
 - Cost per child, family, or unit of service;
 - Transportation costs;
 - Training and consultation costs;
 - Installation and maintenance costs;
 - Quality assurance costs; and
 - Value of the benefits derived compared with the alternative treatment costs avoided.
- Develop, during Phase I prior to project site competition, preliminary logic models (both for components and across eventual project site projects), key research questions, methods to study key components (i.e., evaluation design), and instrumentation that are based on key intervention components proposed by the QIC to address the permanency and well-being of LGBTQ youth;
- Work collaboratively with project sites to develop and refine project site-specific logic models, finalize evaluation questions/design/instrumentation, and pilot data collection procedures;
- Work collaboratively during Phase II with project sites to ensure integrity of data collection processes and to review, analyze, and interpret data;
- Investigate and document planning processes and implementation processes that are not otherwise incorporated in the cross-site and site-specific evaluations;
- Capture what is being done by those practicing (piloting or adapting) the new interventions;

- Capture information about the amount of services provided and data about the adoption of the interventions and the level of adherence to the key components, procedures, and protocols by practitioners; and
- Use the process evaluation to support quality assurance and to assess whether the interventions are being practiced with consistency.

The applicant will propose a set of strategies that allow for the analysis of the functional outcomes of service array changes in the areas of permanency, placement stability, and well-being for LGBTQ children and youth at the systems and individual service recipient levels.

Applicants also shall describe how they will meet the requirements described in *Section I, Project Requirements, Dissemination* and accomplish the following:

- Work collaboratively with project sites to review, analyze, and interpret data; draft reports (including, as approved, journal articles) on findings; and actively disseminate findings from the evaluations;
- Develop and disseminate a body of knowledge regarding the appropriate elements to consider and address when building and implementing models of effective engagement, services, and interventions for LGBTQ children and youth in care; and
- Develop and disseminate a catalogue of LGBTQ-responsive strategies and practices to lay the groundwork for further development of evidence-informed/evidence-based models of intervention for the target population, with supporting protocols, tools, and products that child welfare systems seeking to implement such models can look to for guidance, insight, and replication.

Refer to *Section IV. 2. The Project Description, Dissemination Plan* for additional dissemination requirements.

The applicant must affirm its willingness to participate in all aspects of any federally sponsored evaluation or technical assistance contract as a condition of acceptance of funding.

Geographic Location

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project.

Legal Status of Applicant Entity

Applicants must provide the following documentation:

Non-profit organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax-exemption certificate.
- A statement from a state taxing body, state attorney general, or other appropriate state official certifying that the applicant organization has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.

- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.
- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a state or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

Unless directed otherwise, applicants must include proof of non-profit status in the *Appendices* file of the electronic application submission.

Logic Model

Applicants must submit a logic model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a one-page diagram that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the links among program elements. While there are many versions of logic models, for the purposes of this announcement the logic model should summarize the connections between the:

- Goals of the project (e.g., objectives, reasons for proposing the interventions, if applicable);
- Assumptions (e.g., beliefs about how the program will work and its supporting resources. Assumptions should be based on research, best practices, and experience);
- Inputs (e.g., organizational profile, collaborative partners, key staff, budget);
- Target population (e.g., the individuals to be served);
- Activities (e.g., approach, listing key intervention, if applicable);
- Outputs (i.e., the direct products or deliverables of program activities); and
- Outcomes (i.e., the results of a program, typically describing a change in people or systems).

Project Sustainability Plan

Applicants must propose a plan for project sustainability after the period of federal funding ends. Grantees are expected to sustain key elements of their grant projects, e.g., strategies or services and interventions, which have been effective in improving practices and those that have led to improved outcomes for children and families.

Describe the approach to project sustainment that will be most effective and feasible. Describe the key individuals and/or organizations whose support will be required in order to sustain program activities. Describe the types of alternative support that will be required to sustain the planned program. If the proposed project involves key project partners, describe how their cooperation and/or collaboration will be maintained after the end of federal funding.

Organizational Capacity

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes (no more than two single-spaced pages in length);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures;
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

Dissemination Plan

Applicants must propose a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project information is provided to key target audiences. Dissemination plans must include:

- Dissemination goals and objectives;
- Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences;
- Allocation of sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination purposes;
- A preliminary plan to evaluate the extent to which target audiences have received project information and have used it as intended.

Third-Party Agreements

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements. Third-party agreements must clearly describe the project activities and support to which the third party is committing. Third-party agreements must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization.

Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by

identifying the source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the SFs. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

Special Note: *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, (Division E, Title VII, General Provisions – Government-Wide), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary, or any percentage of salary, to an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$185,100. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for the first year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

Applicants must provide a detailed budget and a narrative budget justification for the first year of the project (not to exceed \$2 million) and a detailed budget and a narrative budget justification for each project year thereafter (not to exceed \$2 million each).

Applicants are encouraged to allocate sufficient funds (i.e., 20 to 25 percent) of their project budget for evaluation and demonstrate that there are sufficient funds in their project budgets each year to support evaluation, data collection, and dissemination activities and related staff time. The applicant's overall line-item budget and budget justification must include detailed

allocations for the range of required evaluation activities, including the following:

- Collection of evaluation data, including costs of staff training and time to collect data;
- Storage of data, including costs for staff to conduct regular activity such as data entry, quality checks, reliability training for coding, etc.; and
- Monitoring and reporting data, including costs for staff to analyze data, create and review reports, and plan and monitor adjustments.

The application's budget must include funds for all required items for the project, including funds to support the following required travel:

- Within 3 months after the award, the project director, evaluator, and one to three other key staff must attend a 2- to 3-day kick-off meeting in Washington, DC.
- In the project site-selection process, the project director, evaluator, and one to three other key staff must attend a 2- to 3-day meeting in Washington, DC, to review and discuss the site selection process and project sites.
- The project director, evaluator, and one to three other key staff must attend the annual grantee meeting, usually held in the spring, in Washington, DC.

General

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both federal and non-federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

Personnel

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent: annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Contractors and consultants should not be placed under this category.

Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, and taxes.

Travel

Description: Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or consultant travel.

Justification: For each trip show the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget.

Equipment

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year per unit and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the applicant organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested applicants must provide a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use of the equipment in the project; as well as a plan for the use, and/or disposal of, the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

Supplies

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

Contractual

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. This area is not for individual consultants.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients are required to use 45 CFR 75.328 procedures and must justify any anticipated

procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed by 41 U.S.C. § 134, as amended by 2 CFR Part 200.88, and currently set at \$150,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each contractor/sub-contractor, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions. If the applicant plans to select the contractors/sub-contractors post-award and a detailed budget is not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide information on the nature of the work to be delegated, the estimated costs, and the process for selecting the delegate agency.

Other

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

Indirect Charges

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

- 1) The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Note: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

- 2) Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, “any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect costs rate, ... may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in § 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.”

Justification: This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent de minimis.

When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs to the grant.

Commitment of Non-Federal Resources

Description: Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

For all federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR § 75.306.

For awards that require matching by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

Justification: If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s). In-kind contributions must be accompanied by a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period (or by project period for fully funded awards). **A recipient's failure to provide a statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.**

Applications that lack the required supporting documentation will not be disqualified from

competitive review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.1.* of this announcement.

Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, expiration date is 01/31/2019. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Application Submission Options

Electronic Submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

After a grant application package is submitted to www.Grants.gov, a confirmation screen will appear on the applicant's computer screen. This screen confirms that an application has been submitted an application to Grants.gov. This page also contains a tracking number to identify the status of the application submission in the Track My Application feature.

When the application has completed the Grants.gov submission process, Grants.gov will send email messages to advise the applicant of the progress of the application through its system. **Over the next two business days, an applicant should receive two emails from Grants.gov:**

- **Submission Receipt Email:** Confirms successful receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system and indicates the application's status as "Received."
- **Submission Validation –OR– Rejection with Errors Email:** Indicates that the application was either successfully validated or rejected by Grants.gov. Either the application has been successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to the grantor agency or the application has been rejected due to errors.

Application Validation at www.Grants.gov

After an application has been successfully submitted to www.Grants.gov, it still must pass a series of validation checks. After an application is submitted, Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies that the application has been successfully delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the opportunity is still open, and the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match.

If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Each time an application is re-submitted to www.Grants.gov, the applicant will receive a new **Submission Receipt Email**. Only applications with on-time date and time stamps in Submission Receipt Email, and that pass validation, will be transmitted to ACF. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check are not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

NOTE: The Grants.gov validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. If an application fails the Grants.gov validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

Similarly, if an applicant resubmits their application to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, and the resubmitted application does not pass the validation check, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

Grants.gov Support Center

- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using www.Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Support Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at support@grants.gov, to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Support Center is closed on federal holidays.
- Applicants should always retain Grants.gov Support Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Support Center prior to the listed application due date and time does not ensure acceptance of an application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s) will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

Issues with Federal Systems

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf.

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files at www.Grants.gov. To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF that must state that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of the two following reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) at www.Grants.gov.

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov, or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)* in this announcement.

Requests for exemption from required electronic application submission will be acknowledged with an approval or disapproval.

Requests that do not state one of the two listed reasons will not be approved.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants must request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

Please Note: electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov **may only be used to request an exemption from required electronic submission.** All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate agency contact listed in *Section VII.* of this announcement. Queries or requests submitted to this email address for any reason other than a request for an exemption from electronic application submission will not be acknowledged or answered.

All exemption requests must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,
- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,

- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application (i.e., the Point of Contact), and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The request for exemption must state one of the following two reasons: 1) lack of Internet access or Internet connection; or 2) lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the Internet.

Exemption requests must be received by ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next federal business day that follows the weekend or federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

Paper Format Application Submission

An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission."

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 p.m, ET, on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants must have a DUNS Number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, <https://www.sam.gov>).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e.

Grants.gov.

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the “Help” tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

IV.4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications: **05/17/2016**

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Electronic Applications

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via www.Grants.gov is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via www.Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via www.Grants.gov are available at: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

Mailed Paper Format Applications

The deadline for receipt of mailed, paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:

- Applications submitted electronically via www.Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.

- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

Emergency Extensions

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

Acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](#)

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to [www.Grants.gov](#). This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](#) for more information.

Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from [www.Grants.gov](#) by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

IV.5. Intergovernmental Review

This program is not subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," or 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." No action is required of applicants under this announcement with regard to E.O. 12372.

IV.6. Funding Restrictions

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR §75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR §75.460)

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

IV.7. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Submission By Mail

CB Operations Center
c/o LCG, Inc.
1400 Key Boulevard
Suite 900
Arlington, VA 22209

Hand Delivery

CB Operations Center
c/o LCG, Inc.
1400 Key Boulevard
Suite 900
Arlington, VA 22209

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

Please note: Reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Objectives and Need for Assistance

Maximum Points:20

In reviewing the objectives and need for assistance, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The application presents a clear description of the proposed project, including a clear statement of the goals (i.e., the intended end products of an effective project) and objectives (i.e., measurable steps for reaching these goals) of the proposed project. The applicant presents a clear vision for developing and implementing the proposed project to contribute to achieving these goals and objectives and clearly addresses the items in *Section IV.2 The Project Description*.
2. The application demonstrates a thorough understanding of the need to develop four to six project sites to plan and implement comprehensive, individualized services for LGBTQ children and youth; placement stability and permanency interventions; and staff, caregiver, and provider competency in providing safe, affirming, and supporting environments. The application demonstrates the need and mechanism for these programs to be effectively linked to stability, permanency, and well-being outcomes. The application demonstrates a thorough understanding of the need to develop systemic change and intervention sustainability in the project sites.
3. The application demonstrates a thorough understanding of the need to assess the characteristics of the target population; the service needs of this population and community; and the status of existing services for the target population.
4. The application's proposed project will support and coordinate with other relevant systems change initiatives ongoing in its geographic location. The applicant clearly defines how the QIC would define, develop, and implement each project to assure key partnerships and collaborations are achieved for accessing needed services and impacting systemic change to achieve desired results for the target population.
5. The application demonstrates an understanding of and plan to develop a catalogue of LGBTQ-responsive strategies and practices to lay the groundwork for further

development of evidence-informed/evidence-based models of intervention for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care, with supporting protocols, tools, and products that child welfare systems seeking to implement improved LGBTQ services can look to for guidance, insight, and replication; and an understanding of and plan to build a body of knowledge regarding the appropriate elements to consider and address when building and implementing a comprehensive model of effective engagement, services, and interventions for LGBTQ children and youth in care.

Approach	Maximum Points: 40
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In reviewing the approach, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The application provides a reasonable timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates. The application describes the factors that could speed or hinder project implementation and explains how these factors would be managed.
2. A well-defined logic model guides the proposed project. The logic model demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities and intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. This includes a clear articulation of the connection between the needs of the target population; the core components of the selected evidence-based or evidence-informed screening, assessment, and intervention approach; and desired outcomes to include functional improvements in the lives of children (i.e., theory of change).
3. The applicant addresses each of the items regarding Phase I: Planning in *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Approach*.
4. The applicant addresses each of the items regarding Phase II: Implementation in *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Approach*.
5. The applicant presents a strong approach to analyzing the data and developing and implementing a plan to select the four to six project sites.
6. The proposed project provides for the development and implementation of practices and strategies that impact the target population.
7. The applicant describes how the QIC's projects would be LGBTQ and culturally responsive to the target population.
8. The applicant proposes a feasible method of enhancing child welfare agency capacity to serve the target population and improve processes, practice, and functional outcomes for the target population with an emphasis on improving placement stability, permanency, and well-being outcomes of LGBTQ children and youth.
9. The design of the proposed project clearly reflects up-to-date knowledge from the research and literature on the issues affecting LGBTQ children and youth (particularly those in foster care) and known practices and intervention models. The design builds on current theory, research, evaluation data, and best practices (including implementation science).
10. The applicant provides a thorough description of how existing practices and interventions in working with LGBTQ children and youth, including those in foster care, will be inventoried and applied as appropriate to project sites and the needs of

the target population.

11. The project is innovative and would lead to increased knowledge and understanding of effective practices and strategies for individualized services, placement stability, permanency initiatives and other issues presented by this FOA. It would also increase knowledge regarding the appropriate elements to consider and address when building and implementing a comprehensive model of effective engagement, services, and interventions for LGBTQ children and youth in care.
12. The applicant outlines plans for establishing and building upon collaborative partnerships, including with CB, to guide and support successful implementation and develop sustainability of successful interventions, including partnerships in the project site. The application includes the following, as applicable:
 - For already identified organizations, agencies, and consultants that will be partners, subcontractors, and collaborators in the proposed QIC, the applicant provides letters of commitment or memoranda of understanding; and
 - For yet-to-be identified organizations, agencies, and consultants, the applicant outlines plans for establishing and building upon collaborative partnerships that will guide and support successful implementation and develop sustainability of successful interventions, including partnerships in the project sites.
 - Letters of commitment or memoranda of understanding describe the role of the agency, organization, or consultant and detail specific tasks to be performed.
13. The proposed project would be integrated into the project site's programs, policies, and practices with the goal of creating safe and affirming environments for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care.
14. There is a sound plan for continuing this project beyond the period of federal funding under this FOA.

Evaluation

Maximum Points:25

In reviewing the evaluation plan, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant proposes a clear and convincing plan for evaluating the project, both at the QIC and project site levels, and satisfies the requirements for the evaluation published in this FOA. The methods of evaluation are feasible, comprehensive, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and context of the project. The evaluation plan is strongly guided by the project's logic model. There is a sound method for securing informed consent and obtaining IRB approval, if applicable.
2. The applicant describes its plan to develop preliminary logic models (both for components and across eventual project site projects), key research questions, methods to study key components, and instrumentation that are based on key intervention components proposed by the QIC to address the permanency and well-being of LGBTQ youth.
3. The evaluation plan outlines an appropriate sampling plan for site-specific evaluations that ensures sample sizes sufficient to detect significant effects. The target sample represents the intended recipients of the services to the greatest

extent possible given the project's structure and resources. The site-specific evaluation plans include consideration of appropriate control or comparison groups for determining the impact of the project activities on outcomes.

4. The evaluation of the QIC and each of its project sites would rigorously measure achievement of project objectives; staff acquisition of skills or knowledge necessary to produce positive changes in family and system outcomes; effectiveness of program services and project strategies; efficiency of the implementation on process, project cost, and effectiveness; and impact of the project on improving child welfare outcomes for LGBTQ children and youth and on promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of families served. The evaluation would support quality assurance, including the assessment of whether interventions are being practiced consistently.
5. The applicant describes how it will work collaboratively with project sites to develop and refine project site-specific logic models; finalize evaluation questions/design/instrumentation; pilot data collection procedures; ensure the integrity of data collection processes; review, analyze, and interpret data; draft reports (including, as approved, journal articles) on findings; and actively disseminate findings from the evaluations.
6. The applicant proposes a set of strategies that allow for the analysis of the functional outcomes of service array changes in the areas of permanency, placement stability, and well-being for LGBTQ children and youth at the systems and individual service recipient levels. The applicant describes proposed data collection activities, the participants, and data management and analysis plans. The applicant specifies expected outcomes and any research questions.
7. The applicant describes how it will capture information about the amount of services provided as well as data about the adoption of the interventions and the level of adherence to the key components, procedures, and protocols by practitioners.
8. The evaluation plan includes a comprehensive analysis of the project cost.
9. The evaluation plan would likely yield useful findings or results about effective strategies and contribute to and promote evidence-based and evidence-informed practices that could be used to guide replication or testing in other settings. The applicant proposes a method to produce documentation that would guide other states, counties, or child welfare systems in future replication or testing.
10. The applicant affirms the willingness to participate in all aspects of any federally sponsored evaluation or technical assistance contract as a condition of acceptance of funding.
11. The applicant describes how it will use evaluation findings to produce ongoing documentation of the QIC and each of the project site activities and results. The evaluation plan includes performance feedback and periodic assessment of overall and project site progress that can be used to modify the projects as necessary, and serve as a basis for QIC and project adjustments.
12. The applicant discusses the factors related to the appropriateness of fit between the selected practices and the systems and settings into which they are introduced.
13. The applicant either demonstrates that the applicant has the in-house capacity to conduct an objective and rigorous evaluation of the project or presents a sound method for contracting with a third-party evaluator. The proposed evaluator has

extensive experience with research and/or evaluation, clearly understands the population of interest, and demonstrates the capacity to ensure objectivity of evaluation findings.

14. The proposed dissemination plan is appropriate in scope and budget and the mechanisms and forums that would be used to convey the information and support replication by other interested agencies are clearly suitable. The plan will detail the development and dissemination of interventions, findings, protocols, assessments, and products. The plan will also detail the development and dissemination of elements to consider and address when building a model of engagement, service and intervention for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care. The intended audience (e.g., researchers, policymakers, practitioners) for dissemination of products and findings is clearly appropriate to the goals and objectives. The schedule for developing these products is appropriate in scope and budget.

Organizational Profiles

Maximum Points:10

In reviewing the organizational profiles, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant's organization and any partnering organizations collectively have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar child welfare system programs. Each participating organization (including partners and/or subcontractors) possesses the organizational capability to fulfill its assigned roles and functions effectively.
2. The proposed project director and key project staff demonstrate sufficient relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities (e.g., resume) to effectively institute and manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity. The role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners, is clearly defined (e.g., job descriptions) and appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposed project.
3. The applicant clearly demonstrates that the QIC has the experience and will have the capacity to work in partnership with state, county, and/or tribal child welfare systems in the development of the project sites and in the delivery of accessible and individualized services to LGBTQ children and youth in foster care.
4. The applicant clearly demonstrates that there would be a mutually beneficial relationship between the QIC and its project sites and other work planned, anticipated, or underway with federal assistance by the applicant.
5. There is a sound management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined roles and responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing QIC tasks and project site tasks, while ensuring quality. The plan clearly defines the role and responsibilities of the lead agency. The plan clearly describes the effective management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants (if applicable).

Budget and Budget Justification

Maximum Points:5

In reviewing the budget and budget justification, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. There is a detailed budget and narrative budget justification for each year of the project. The costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits.
2. The costs of the project are reasonable and program-related and are commensurate with the types and range of activities and services to be conducted, the number of participants to be served, and the expected goals and objectives.
3. There is evidence that the applicant's fiscal controls and accounting procedures would ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of funds received under this funding opportunity announcement.

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number (www.dnb.com) and an active registration at SAM (www.sam.gov). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants

As required by 2 CFR 200 of the Uniform Guidance, effective January 1, 2016, ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), <https://www.fapiis.gov/>, before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000) over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205 Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1205&rgn=div8).

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications determined as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of the determination by email.

V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification.

VI. Federal Award Administration Information

VI.1. Federal Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail, email, or by GrantSolutions.gov or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements>.

Award Term and Condition for Federal Recognition of Same-Sex Spouses/Marriage

A standard term and condition of award will be included in the final Notice of Awards (NOA) that states: “In any grant-related activity in which family, marital, or household considerations are, by statute or regulation, relevant for purposes of determining beneficiary eligibility or participation, grantees must treat same-sex spouses, marriages, and households on the same terms as opposite-sex spouses, marriages, and households, respectively. By “same-sex spouses,” HHS means individuals of the same sex who have entered into marriages that are valid in the jurisdiction where performed, including any of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. territory or in a foreign country, regardless of whether or not the couple resides in a jurisdiction that recognizes same-sex marriage. By “same-sex marriages,” HHS means marriage between two individuals validly entered into in the jurisdiction where performed, including any of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. territory or in a foreign country, regardless of whether or not the couple resides in a jurisdiction that recognizes same-sex-marriage. By “marriage,” HHS does not mean registered domestic partnerships, civil unions or similar formal relationships recognized under the law of the jurisdiction of celebration as something other than a marriage.”

VI.3. Reporting

Recipients under this FOA will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2>.

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Performance Progress Reports:	Semi-Annually
Financial Reports:	Semi-Annually

VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Program Office Contact

Taffy Compain
Children's Bureau
CB Operations Center
c/o LCG, Inc.
1400 Key Boulevard
Suite 900
Arlington, VA 22209
Phone: (888) 203-6161
Email: CB@grantreview.org

Office of Grants Management Contact

Bridget Shea Westfall
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants
CB Operations Center, c/o LCG, Inc.
1400 Key Boulevard
Suite 900
Arlington, VA 22209
Phone: (888) 203-6161
Email: CB@grantreview.org

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) <http://www.hhs.gov/>.

HHS Grants Forecast <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/hsgsgrantsforecast/index.cfm>.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>.

ACF Grants Homepage <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants>.

ACF Funding Opportunities <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/>.

ACF "How to Apply for a Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-to-apply-for-grants>.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) <https://www.cfda.gov/>.

For submission of a paper format application, all required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Grants-Forms page through <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Standard grant forms are available at the [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) Forms Repository webpage at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at <http://www07.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/accessibility-compliance.html>.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.ecfr.gov>.

The *Federal Register* <https://www.federalregister.gov>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://uscode.house.gov>.

Application Checklist

Applicants may use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Mandatory Grant Disclosure	Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the "Mandatory Grant Disclosure" entry in the table in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications</i> .	Concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.
Commitment of Non-Federal Resources		
DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the announcement. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform . To register at SAM, go to http://www.sam.gov .	A DUNS number and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants. Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the

		application and project award period.
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</p> <p>by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement.	Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A or SF-424C. It must be submitted with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</p> <p>by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
Logic Model	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i></p>	<p>Submission is due with the application package by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>Additional information and necessary forms are available at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is also available at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</p> <p>by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	<p>Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i> If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award</p>

		of a grant.
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov page under the "Application Package" tab in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Available at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>These forms are required for applications under this FOA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that include only non-construction activities must submit the SF-424A and SF-424B, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL. 	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	<p>"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on</p>	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it not available at the time of

	<p>the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is available in the electronic application kit at Grants.gov and at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>If applicable, submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.</p>	<p><i>at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</i></p>
Third-Party Agreements (also, MOUs and Consortia Agreements)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description</i> .	If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4</i> . If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award.
Project Sustainability Plan	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates</i>

		<i>and Times.</i>
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Project Summary/Abstract	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Proof of Non-Profit Status	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> , <i>Legal Status of Applicant Entity</i> .	Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.

Appendix

Project Site Components

The QIC would prioritize public child welfare system sites that most comprehensively provide a platform for systemic change by actively engaging in, or evidencing a robust plan for the following:

- Prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and ensuring LGBTQ children and youth in care are respected by child welfare agency staff and peers;
- Increasing LGBTQ competency among agency staff, foster parents, and other caregivers;
- Providing a comprehensive array of services that address the specific needs of LGBTQ children, youth, and their families regarding services, permanency, and placement stability;
- Engaging community partners and service providers in developing LGBTQ-affirming policies and practices;
- Effecting prudent parenting, opportunities for normalcy activities, and LGBTQ-affirming homes;
- Creating safe spaces for LGBTQ children and youth to safely self-identify when they are comfortable doing so and to provide support after this self-identification;
- Effectively managing and protecting the confidentiality of information on the sexual orientation and gender identity of youth in the child welfare system; and
- Integrating effective practice models within the project site system, including the policies, programs, and practices that impact LGBTQ children and youth in foster care.

Examples (not inclusive) of project components may include the following:

- Development of a systems-level response in acknowledging the needs of this target population and providing a safe and affirming environment while supporting the necessary changes in policy and practice;
- Early engagement with LGBTQ children and youth and their families as well as caregivers;
- An appropriate cadre of services supporting LGBTQ children, youth, and their families in different geographic settings;
- Development of safe and affirming placement options that bring about stability and permanency;
- Competent mental and behavioral health services, to include in-home services, individual services, and support groups;
- Development of LGBTQ-responsive initial and ongoing assessment tools;
- Creation of teams that bring the children and youth, families, caregivers, and service providers together to develop and manage a comprehensive plan of supports;
- 24-hour crisis intervention for children and youth in the target population;
- 24-hour crisis intervention for caregivers;
- Innovations that reduce run-away and homelessness episodes for LGBTQ children and youth;
- Recruitment of LGBTQ and/or LGBTQ-friendly foster and adoptive parents;
- Training of agency staff, provider staff and caregivers in becoming educated about and

- responsive to LGBTQ populations when addressing the traumas and needs of the target population; and
- Addressing data collection and confidentiality concerns.

The intervention strategies will consider the following key elements that need to be addressed with children that have come to the attention of the child welfare system:

- Developmental tasks: Intervention strategies must be attuned to the developmental impact of negative experiences and address related strengths and deficits to ensure children and youth will develop along a healthy trajectory;
- Coping strategies: Children who grow up in unsafe, unpredictable environments may have coping strategies that protected them in that context but are not appropriate in safer, more-regulated situations. Interventions should help children and youth transform maladaptive coping methods into healthier, more productive strategies; and
- Protective factors: The presence of certain contextual factors and characteristics can moderate the impact of past and future negative experiences. These protective factors are fundamental to resilience and integral to successful interventions.

Expected outcomes for the project sites include:

- Development and implementation of effective practice models to improve permanency, well-being, and placement stability outcomes for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care (with the QIC);
- Promising practices, evidence-informed/evidence-based models of engagement, services, and interventions that can be replicated in other child welfare systems;
- Integration of identified practice models within the project site system, including the policies, programs and practices that impact LGBTQ children and youth in foster care; and
- Improved well-being, permanency, and placement stability outcomes for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care.

Project Site Selection

All project site applicants must clearly state which of the five selective areas of focus they commit to test interventions in (minimum of two) and justify their selections in terms of documented needs associated with specific project goals and objectives. The QIC is responsible to develop models of effective engagement, services and intervention in collaboration with the project sites, based on the focus areas selected. The models must be able to be linked to specific permanency, well-being, and placement stability outcomes that will be measured and analyzed to determine the impact of the models on those outcomes.

In addition, all project sites will commit to integrating these models within the project site system, including the policies, programs, and practices that impact LGBTQ children and youth in foster care. Collaborations with placement agencies, congregate care providers, and service providers to develop an LGBTQ-response system will be a part of integrating the models. All project sites will work closely with the QIC in the development and implementation of the project, including receiving technical support from the QIC throughout implementation.

In the review and consideration of the strategy for each project site, the following common

and variable aspects should be considered:

- Common aspects of the project sites will include:
 - Method and process for safely identifying the children and youth targeted for each project site;
 - Method and process for determining the appropriate evaluation strategies;
 - Development of interventions that increase LGBTQ-competency among agency staff, caregivers, and service providers in working with the target population;
 - Partnerships and collaborations with community, placement agencies, and service providers;
 - Evaluation of the effects of the interventions on permanency, stability, and well-being outcomes; and
 - Development of a more inclusive system for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care through informed changes in policy and practice.
- Variable aspects of the project sites will include:
 - The types of interventions used;
 - The geographic settings for service models;
 - The structures of the state, county, or tribal child welfare systems chosen as project sites;
 - The sizes of the general population, foster care population, and targeted population;
 - Their permanency goals and placement types of the target population; and
 - The administrative organization and staffing structure of each of the project sites.

In all sites, the QIC will work intensively with each project site to identify barriers and make recommendations for needed changes in the state, county, or tribal child welfare system laws, policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that the innovations will work most effectively and contribute toward the development of promising practices and evidence-informed/evidence-based models for working with the target population.

Project Site Evaluation Responsibilities

Project sites are required to engage with the QIC in site-specific evaluations in order to improve their processes and services and to demonstrate linkages between proposed interventions and improved outcomes. Additionally, project sites are expected to participate fully in any cross-site evaluation of activities funded under this FOA. The purposes of the cross-site evaluation may include identifying interventions that impact the permanency and well-being outcomes for LGBTQ children and youth; to provide useful information about the implementation of those interventions within a child welfare system; to provide information about the cost implications of these interventions for the child welfare system; and to extrapolate how the interventions might work more broadly in and to disseminate those findings to the field.

Project site applicants should submit logic models for their proposed projects, as well as preliminary thoughts on evaluation. At the time of site selection, the QIC will work with successful applicants' preliminary plans.

Project sites may be expected to participate in the collection and reporting of common process, outcome, or cost data. As appropriate, based on identified target populations and

interventions, project sites will be asked to track and report common outcomes in order to assess whether the interventions are leading to improvements in permanency and well-being. Project sites will work in collaboration with the QIC to develop a set of measures on which all projects will be expected to report. Project sites should plan for additional program staff time and effort related to participation in both the site-specific and cross-site evaluations.

Additionally, at a minimum, project sites must outline in their proposals how data would be obtained, tracked (including whether this would require agreements with project partners), and reported to the QIC.

Project sites must participate if CB chooses to do a federally led evaluation or a technical assistance contract that relates to this FOA.

Focus Areas for Evaluation

Both during and at the conclusion of the 5-year project, the QIC will be expected to answer evaluation questions for each of the project sites funded through this announcement, including, but not limited to, the following five topical areas:

- Implementation and service delivery, including:
 - Output data for the different stages of the project (including quantity and frequency of activities and services performed);
 - Descriptive data about the interventions;
 - Descriptive data about the activities carried out to implement the interventions;
 - Data about the degree to which adoption and implementation (e.g., uptake, penetration, fidelity, etc.) of the interventions has occurred; and
 - Data about changes in readiness, capacity, infrastructure, and organization intended to support and sustain implementation;
- System integration;
- Sustainability;
- Outcomes, including:
 - Data indicators measured in the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) (when appropriate and feasible, the evaluation should yield data that can be compared to, and contrasted with, regional, state, and national level CFSR data, as appropriate); and
 - Outcomes related to the logic models, including those that focus on increasing the permanency and well-being of LGBTQ children and youth; and
- Cost (see *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Funded Activities Evaluation Plan*)

Within these areas, CB is particularly interested in the following:

- Factors and strategies associated with successful implementation (facilitators), including contributing organizational and system conditions;
- Implementation barriers;
- Factors related to the appropriateness of fit between the selected practices and the systems and settings into which they are introduced;
- Degrees to which implementations spread and are maintained over time;
- Sustainability of the new practices and services; and
- Cost of implementation and ongoing service delivery changes.

